

KING COUNTY SOLID WASTE ADVISORY COMMITTEE

July 21, 2006

Comprehensive Solid Waste Management Plan

Approved Meeting Notes

Members in Attendance

David Allison
Carolyn Armanini
Bill Beck
Joe Casalini
Don Freas
Steve Goldstein
Jerry Hardebeck
Joan McGilton
Max Pope
Carolyn Prentice
Ray Schlien
Relaena Sindelar
Judy Stenberg
Dave Whitley

Others in Attendance

Gemma Alexander
David Baker
Teri Barclay
Geraldine Cole
Mike Huddleston
Scott Johnson
Anna Lewis
Suellen Mele
Angela Wallis
Diane Yates
Bill Ziegler

Action Items

Lines 18-20: Approval of May and June minutes.

Lines 203-206: Addition of sustainability question to third party review.

Lines 208-210: Placement of sustainability question for third party review.

Lines 219-221: Revision of WTE question for third party review.

Call to Order and Introductions

Chair Carolyn Armanini called the meeting to order at 9:35 am.

Everyone in attendance introduced themselves.

SWAC Staff Liaison Diane Yates announced that Engineering Services Manager Kevin Kiernan is on vacation for the next 3 ½ weeks. Assistant Division Director Geraldine Cole will replace him in the discussion of agenda item six. Division Director Theresa Jennings broke her foot last week. She will return to the office on Monday.

Yates said that agenda item seven, the recycling goals presentation, is not ready and will be on next month's SWAC agenda.

Joe Casalini has received his appointment letter and is now an official voting member of SWAC. The division wants to thank the three SWAC members who volunteered to serve

on the artist selection panel for Bow Lake Transfer Station. SWAC will receive updates from 4Culture regarding art for the transfer system upgrades.

Approval of Minutes

SWAC member Bill Beck moved approval of the May and June minutes.

The motion passed unanimously.

SWD Update

Yates reported the comment period for the Environmental Impact Statement on the Waste Export System Plan closed Monday. Only one comment was received from the City of Tukwila. The Final EIS is now expected to be completed sooner than originally scheduled.

First NE construction continues and pile driving is scheduled to begin next week.

The council passed the ordinance changing due dates for the Waste Export System Plan and other work products on July 10.

MSWMAC Update

SWAC member and MSWMAC Vice Chair Joan McGilton reported that MSWMAC's last agenda matched today's SWAC agenda. In response to a question, she said that attendance at MSWMAC has been good.

SWAC Subcommittees

Armanini said that until last year, SWAC had two standing subcommittees –Facilities, and Waste Reduction and Recycling (WRR) – that met before and after regular SWAC meetings. Last year the subcommittee meetings were discontinued and their topics were folded into the planning work for the Waste Export System Plan. The intent was to revisit that decision regularly. Today SWAC will discuss whether to renew the old subcommittees, continue meeting as a whole or develop new subcommittees.

46 Hardebeck said he attended Seattle SWAC for the first time recently and they talked a lot
47 about sustainability in relation to self-haul, transport and incineration issues. He
48 proposed SWAC consider a sustainability subcommittee.

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50 SWAC member Don Freas suggested that the WRR committee should meet, perhaps
51 quarterly, because SWAC could miss some things that don't make it to the already full
52 agenda of the whole committee.

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54 Armanini asked if a separate quarterly meeting is necessary, or if a regular quarterly
55 agenda item for the full SWAC would be sufficient.

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57 Yates commented that for the next few months, as the division prepares for the Comp
58 Plan, SWAC will be discussing recycling issues at length. Some meetings agendas may
59 include only recycling issues. She added that SWAC has been flexible in extending
60 meeting duration when agendas become too full. That continues to be an option.

61
62 Goldstein said SWAC membership is intentionally diverse to provide a number of
63 viewpoints, and that diversity is lost when subcommittees are formed around specific
64 interests. He suggested that project-specific subcommittees could be more appropriate.

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66 SWAC member Max Pope suggested SWAC use ad hoc committees to address specific
67 issues for a fixed time, rather than ongoing subcommittees.

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69 SWAC member Judy Stenberg commented that the WRR subcommittee agendas were
70 always full, and members got a lot of information in an hour and a half meeting. She
71 asked if there are things that SWAC is missing without those meetings.

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73 Yates said that she asked Recycling and Environmental Services Manager Jeff Gaisford
74 that question a few months ago and he said there were no items to bring to SWAC

Yates commented that the bylaws state, “Standing subcommittees shall be established at the first meeting of January each year” and suggested that SWAC may change the bylaws if it decides not to reactivate the standing committees.

SWAC member Bill Beck commented that he sometimes felt the Facilities subcommittee didn’t have much to do, and during the last year that the subcommittees met, Facilities only met about half the time.

Armanini said it sounded like the group preferred to rely on ad hoc committees as needed rather than reactivating the standing subcommittees.

SWAC member Dave Whitley agreed.

SWAC agreed by consensus that future agendas will include “Other Updates” to hear from members who have attended other groups. SWAC agreed by consensus that the division will revise sections G and H of the bylaws in advance of the next meeting. SWAC will vote to approve the revised bylaws in August.

Third Party Review

County Council Staff Mike Huddleston said Ordinance 14971 calls for a third party review where experts answer questions about the division’s evaluation of the solid waste system. The review is modeled after a process that was used for the Regional Wastewater Services Plan. Experts with various specialties from around the country were pulled together to answer specific questions asked by stakeholders. The process was very successful; it validated many of staff’s assumptions and resulted in changes to some of their recommendations.

For this review, stakeholder groups will identify five to twelve critical questions requiring a “second opinion.” Council will select a local consultant to help assemble a panel of experts from around the US. The panel will be provided with a compendium of relevant technical reports as background. The panel will be given the list of questions

107 and a couple of weeks to study the background materials. The panel will be briefed by
108 the division, meet with stakeholder groups and then develop responses to the questions.
109 The local consultant will compile the responses into a report that council will use to
110 inform its decision on the Waste Export System Plan. The entire process should be
111 completed by September 28.

112
113 Council is currently preparing an RFP for the local consultant. The procurement process
114 will take about 5 more weeks. Council staff Merri Ann Osborne is managing the
115 procurement process, and will be emailing SWAC members with updates. There is
116 \$130,000 allocated for the review. Most of this will go to the local consultant, as experts
117 usually do not charge fees. ITSG and MSWMAC have finalized their questions. These,
118 together with SWAC's questions, will be attached to the RFP.

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120 Huddleston added that the chair of the council must be empowered to sign the contract
121 with the consultant. Legislation is being drafted for that purpose, but for the sake of time,
122 will not be circulated for review.

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124 Armanini said SWAC members have been given two versions of the questions. The first
125 is dated June 29, and is the draft that SWAC has already seen. The second is dated July
126 14 and reflects MSWMAC's latest changes. This draft is divided into questions that
127 should be answered by the panel now, and those that should be answered in later review.

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129 Huddleston said four categories of questions have been deferred: early export, export
130 recommendations, long haul and procurement. He said these issues are not timely yet,
131 but will be, and noted that MSWMAC has made this clear in formatting the questions.

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133 He added that although current county policy dictates waste export, there is growing
134 interest in alternative disposal methods. He commented that regardless of which disposal
135 method is used, the county needs an upgraded transfer system.

Yates said MSWMAC's questions are provided for SWAC's information, but are not meant to limit SWAC in any way.

Armanini suggested that discussion be broken into two parts; the first part would be questions for Huddleston, followed by internal discussion of the questions.

McGilton asked how differing opinions are folded into the review.

Huddleston replied that it depends on the question. For example, in the wastewater process, there was a question about what the impact would be if the demographics assumptions were inaccurate. The experts looked at a range of possible growth scenarios to illustrate their impacts.

Goldstein commented that there were legal mandates moving the wastewater process along, and asked what would keep this one moving without such mandates.

Huddleston said the stakeholder groups play an important role in terms of advising the council. He added that the two processes are more similar than they appear at first. Both are public health issues with capacity concerns.

Armanini thanked Huddleston for coming to SWAC.

McGilton said that MSWMAC was helped by Chair Garber's extremely analytical condensation of the original questions.

Armanini agreed, commenting that the newer document is more both refined and broadened from the earlier one. She said she appreciates the division of the document into current and deferred questions. Referring to the Public Involvement section, she asked if SWAC thought the first two questions could be merged.

167 McGilton commented that MSWMAC also discussed this and the difference between the
168 two is that the first question refers to the overall planning process while the second refers
169 to the facility siting process.

171 Hardebeck said that he can imagine a broad sustainability policy being developed at King
172 County in the near future, and suggested that SWAC anticipate that by adding a question
173 to the review about whether the recommended plan is the most sustainable – does it
174 minimize traffic and fuel consumption?

176 Goldstein said the SEPA process should address that question.

178 McGilton said it does not. She said the question is broader than SEPA and would, for
179 example, include consideration of what the system would look like with twice monthly
180 pickup instead of weekly pickup.

182 Armanini said that is a cities contract issue that the division has limited ability to
183 influence.

185 Cole said the division is looking into sending a price signal. The rate study analyzes a
186 transaction plus tonnage tipping fee that would be applied to all customers. This is a
187 policy decision the division will present to council.

189 Goldstein said he agreed with Hardebeck's concept, but thinks that division staff already
190 embed the concept of sustainability in their work.

192 Whitley commented that it makes sense for the county to be aligned with the City of
193 Seattle, which already incorporates the lens of long range sustainability in its planning.

195 SWAC member Joe Casalini commented that the term sustainability is not well defined
196 and policy statements that use it are far from uniform. He said sustainability should be
197 approached on a regional basis.

Hardebeck said he would write a question about sustainability for SWAC to consider for the third party review. SWAC members agreed that fossil fuel consumption could be used as a proxy for “sustainability.”

Hardebeck moved to add the question, “Are there models or methods for the transfer of solid waste from the point of generation to final disposal that minimize fossil fuel consumption and air pollution?” to the third party review.

The motion passed unanimously.

After discussion, Whitley moved the new question be placed under its own topic category, “Sustainability.”

The motion passed unanimously.

SWAC member Carolyn Prentice asked if it was necessary to define Waste to Energy (WTE), and whether the SWANA definition referred to by Theresa Jennings in May inferred by the question.

Cole said the SWANA definition is a broad industry standard that experts will understand, and includes other technologies in addition to incineration.

Armanini moved that the word “technologies” be added to WTE to clarify the question.

The motion passed unanimously.

Waste Export System Plan and Business Plan

Yates said she would email SWAC members the full drafts of these documents later today.

Cole said the division is recommending Transfer Package One, modified by the agreement with the City of Bellevue.

The division recommends that the current mix of public and private ownership and operation of the solid waste system continue, with disposal privatized at the time of Cedar Hills Landfill closure.

Goldstein commented that the plan should allow for privatization of specific waste streams in the future.

The division recommends that Cedar Hills Landfill's lifespan be extended to the maximum extent practicable, which could be as late as 2020. In response to a question, Cole said there is no legal requirement or agreement with Cedar Hills' neighbors regarding the closure date of the landfill.

The division recommends that decisions about long haul transport and decisions about intermodal capacity be deferred because it would be premature to eliminate options so far in advance of waste export. The division will continue to lease the Fisher property until intermodal decisions are made.

In response to a question, Cole said the division paid cash for the property. The property was purchased with funds that were collected in the 80's for incineration, and with savings from operational efficiencies. Rent received from the property goes into the Solid Waste Fund.

Armanini commented that it is reasonable to expect a return on the investment, and the property should be managed effectively. She said she would like to learn more about the management of the Fisher site in coming meetings.

Hardebeck said port property is in high demand now and it might be a good time to consider selling it, especially since the division is preparing for a lot of capital expenses.

Cole said it is possible to evaluate the income from the Fisher property and added that there is also a non-quantifiable benefit to ownership.

The division recommends a market test of early export using an RFP to export 20% of the county's waste once Bow Lake Transfer Station is completed and 20% of the waste is compacted. The decision whether to export early will depend on the outcome of the RFP.

Armanini said that in the limited time remaining, Cole will present the contents of the business plan. Noting that there will be time to discuss the plan further, she asked members to hold their questions to the end.

Cole said this business plan is not a typical business plan. It is a document defined by Ordinance 14971, and its contents follow the list identified in the ordinance.

Emergency Capacity: Jurisdictions in Puget Sound (King County, Kitsap County, Snohomish County, Pierce County and the City of Seattle) will discuss the issue. They may be willing to pay King County to maintain some emergency capacity.

System Reliability: Can our facilities withstand earthquakes or catastrophic storms and meet FEMA immediate occupancy standards?

Efforts to coordinate planning and operation with other jurisdictions: This refers to the MSWMAC process and discussions with neighboring jurisdictions.

Possible impacts of future system choices on employees: Most changes that will impact employees are being deferred.

Strategies to encourage competition: Deferring some decisions keeps options open.

Preserving service levels: Beck commented that self haulers will miss Renton Transfer Station. He suggested that self haul service be provided at Cedar Hill to compensate.

Armanini said that some people will be disappointed by the closure of Houghton as well. She commented that any time there is change, some people will be inconvenienced. The division is only responsible to provide reasonable alternatives.

Cole said all facilities are full service in Package One, so every facility will be available to all customers. In response to a question she said Cedar Falls drop box will maintain limited hours in the short term, but hours could be extended if demand increases.

Integration of waste export activities with the transfer network: This basically says that new transfer stations will be able to compact waste.

Environmental protection: The Environmental Impact Statement (EIS) found no unavoidable adverse impacts of the Waste Export System Plan. All new stations will meet LEED green building standards.

Potential benefits of a federated system: This describes economies of scale that are realized for the region by having the Interlocal Agreements for solid waste management.

Armanini said SWAC will discuss the Waste Export System Plan and the Business Plan in more detail, as well as begin the discussion of recycling goals, at the August meeting.

Open Forum

Hardebeck asked about the results of the Materials Recovery Facility (MRF) Study. Cole said the consultant is waiting for data from one company.

The meeting adjourned at 12:00

Submitted by:

Gemma Alexander, SWD Staff